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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0186
RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 0030
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0695
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0035
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEAHL/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2016
TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: AMCIT PARFAIT AND OTHER HOSTAGES RELEASED

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

11. (C) Ten days into the crisis, Amcit Royce Parfait and the five other expatriate hostages were released last night. The release came within several hours after Senator David Brigidi of Bayelsa State opened another line of communication to the kidnappers. While speculation is rife about ransom payments and one of the hostages claimed overhearing kidnappers talk about a 35-65 million naira (approximately 275,000-500,000 USD) pay off, there is no conclusive proof that money exchanged hands.

12. (U) The hostages spent the night in Port Harcourt at the Governor,s official residence. (Evidently, the place where they were held is not too far from Port Harcourt.) One of the expatriates estimated theirs was a two hour boat ride from the place they had been held to Port Harcourt. The men are in relatively good spirits and do not appear to have been mistreated. Two of the hostages are ridden with insect bites. The hostages were kept outside or in a rudimentary hut by the kidnappers. Medical examinations have been taken but test results for malaria are not yet back.

13. (C) This morning the hostages were flown to Lagos on the Rivers State Governor,s jet. Royce Parfait told us the kidnappers numbered 40-45. They were well armed but not well disciplined. They verbally threatened the hostages but never resorted to physical violence. Another hostage claimed drug consumption by the kidnappers, mostly marijuana, was daily and pervasive. The other hostages confirmed the kidnappers appeared to have a sizeable weapons cache to the extent they had constructed a concrete building to house and conceal their arsenal. The kidnappers were heard claiming they would take a month long hiatus from kidnapping before striking again. Potential sites mentioned were the Presidential Hotel in Port Harcourt and a few other well known nightclubs in the city. They also boasted about seeking more high profile hostages such as the British High Commissioner and American Ambassador should they visit Port Harcourt.

¶4. (U) Amcit Royce Parfait is scheduled to leave Nigeria aboard Air France flight 875 tonight for his onward connection to Chattanooga. Before departing he will do a quick debrief with Legatt. Embassy Paris has been informed of Parfait,s transit and we provided him the Embassy,s number should he encounter complications with his transit flight. The Country Manager for Parfait,s employer, Edison Chouest, will accompany him the entire flight.
BROWNE